

spectator, watching the world with wide, curious eyes till it is time to close them in sleep for ever; but to be, naturally and fully, himself—jouir loyalement de son etre'. If Freedom is for him one ultimate ideal, Health, of mind and of body, sanity and 'sante', is really the other. Here he forgets all scepticism; and here he becomes completely un-Christian. His world does not groan and travail. His Virtue wears no rue: 'cette vertu supreme, belle, triomphante, amoureuse, delicieuse pareillement et courageuse, ennemi professe et irreconciliable d'aigreur, de desplaisir, de crainte et de contraincte, ayant pour guide Nature, Fortune et Volupte pour compagnes'. *Il n'est rien plus gay, plus gaillard, plus enjoue, et a peu que ie ne die folastre'—thus he would have Virtue painted to the young; not 'd'un visage renfrogné, sourcilleux, et terrible*. It is a strange morality, even now, to English ears. But Montaigne is a child of his race. He comes from further south than Ronsard. I shall never forget staying at Saint-Remy and meeting on a farm there a local character—le poëte'. He was an elderly countryman, sunburnt to the very image, in terracotta, of a laughing faun. From his twinkling eyes one looked down involuntarily at his feet as if to find a pair of twinkling goat's hoofs. His latest composition, I gathered, had been inspired by the refusal of his kitchen-fire to light. So he had sat down and

extemporised some verses to the effect that
nothing
mattered now, since France had regained
Alsace-Lorraine.
Such hilarious irony was too much for any
fire- From
that moment, he assured us, it burnt like
mad. In that
happy Midi the art of writing letters, so
dependent on the
gift of gaiety, still survives; and Montaigne
takes my
memory back to one received from my
hostess in Pro-
vence a little later: "Nous sommes trop
tannés, noirs et
recuits ici, pour permettre au vent d'est de
nous rendre